

CONSIDERATIONS

ON A

LETTER

TO THE

MAYOR of ———,

Esq. Esq. Esq.



[Price SIX-PENCE.]

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By J. G. G.

[Price Six-Pence.]

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TO THE

MAYOR of _____,

In Relation to a BILL now de-
pending in ~~Great Britain~~ PARLIAMENT,

FOR THE

Encouragement of SEAMEN employed
in the ROYAL NAVY, &c. &c. &c.



Bill read
24 Jan. 1758

L O N D O N:

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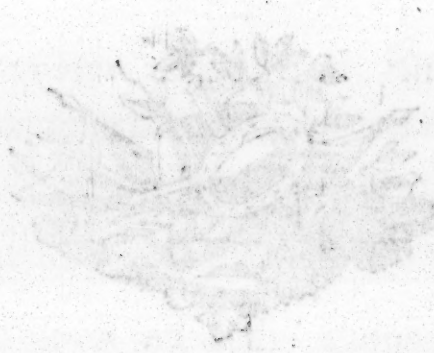
TO THE

MAYOR OF

In Relation to a Bill now de-
pending in PARLIAMENT



Encouragement
in the Royal



LONDON:

Printed for William Law, in Pall Mall.
1832.

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ON A
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TO THE
MAYOR of _____,
Esq. Esq. Esq.

IT may be thought unfair to enquire into the Motives, that induce a Man to turn his Thoughts and Actions to the public Good.

It is enough that he does so! Public spirited Men are so rare, and the Hours of Life so alternately taken up in Ease and
Luxury,

Luxury, that few have Inclination or Leisure to employ their Time in Acts, which tend solely to public Utility.

If it should even appear that the eager pursuit of Popularity, the favourite Idol of the present Times, was the chief Motive of doing good, it is not only excusable but commendable, if in the course of that pursuit abuses are reformed and the distresses of Mankind are relieved.

THESE Reflections led me to consider the tendency and drift of a Pamphlet lately published, intitled ' A Letter to the Mayor of ——— or rather a preparatory introduction, of the Bill now depending for the Encouragement of Seamen, &c. and to examine the Whole with the greatest Candour and Truth.'

THE Condition of our British Seamen, that useful Body of Men, is an Object worthy the Attention of the Legislature and the whole Nation: Their Distresses should be considered and relieved; for it is an alarming

ing Circumstance to hear, that in the midst of a War, hitherto unsuccessful, the Seamen are injured and oppressed, and are groaning with Distresses which cry aloud for Compassion and Relief.

IT is generally presumed that the Lord High Admiral or Commissioners for executing that Important Office, have the entire Care and Management of the Seamen employed in his Majesty's Service; their Allotment, their Stations, and the frequency of their Pay are, as has been hitherto understood, under their Direction.

CAN, therefore, the Gentlemen who fill the present Board of Ad——ty be wanting in Humanity? Can they be so supine in Office to hear the Cries of the distressed Seamen and their Families, and not order them to be relieved? Surely not! Is there not one Champion amongst them for the oppressed British Sailors in His Majesty's Navy? I am sorry to say there is not! And that this Nation is entirely obliged to —— for a System of Naval Regulations, whose depart-

department lays intirely in another Way. But whose distinguished Merit in this and in every other Business of the greatest Importance, will intitle him to those Rewards which Public Virtue deserve.

I SHALL now proceed to consider the present Plan of our Naval Regulations, the Necessity there appears to be of additions and amendments, and whether those proposed are such, as will answer the Purpose intended.

THE several Clauses which relate to the Encouragement of Seamen, to enter into and continue in His Majesty's Service are more clearly and more briefly stated in the Acts of the 4th Queen *Ann* and the 1st of *George* 2d than in the depending Bill: The former Act directs the immediate Payment of Men turned over from one Ship to another, and of Tickets made out for Men discharged unserviceable; the latter Acts of 1st *George* 2d One for the constant, regular and 'punctual Payment of Seamen's 'Wages for the Future; the other, An
 ' Act

Act for encouraging Seamen to enter into His Majesty's Service, go thro' the whole Plan of Naval Regulations, from the first raising the Seamen to his Dismissal from His Majesty's Service.

THESE Acts, which are very Compendious, are the Basis on which the present Naval Regulations are founded; and which Experience has shewn in general to be, a right, proper and well conducted Plan.

THE Arrears of Seamen's Wages are regularly and duly paid. The Money granted by Parliament for the Service of the Navy, such Part as is proportioned for Seamen's Wages, is properly issued and applied to those Services. The Method prescribed by the Act, for paying the Seamen Two Months Wages in every Six that shall be due to them, was complied with, until it was found, not only to the Service, but to the Seamen prejudicial; and the payment of the rest and residue of their Wages, so strictly enjoined by the same Clause is to be made within Two Months after the

Ship is laid up, is so notorious a Practice, that it is a Matter of Astonishment, the Contrary has ever been asserted.

THE same Clause directs (what is the constant Usage) the Payment of Twelve Months Wages when Eighteen are due, and from Time to Time to Pay off so much of their growing Wages.

VOLUNTIERS are intitled to Wages from the Day of their Entry with any authorized Officer of the Fleet, they are allowed Conduct-Money, Carriage of their Cloaths and an Advance of Two Months Pay, and are never turned over to serve in a worse Quality than in their former Ships.

INFERIOR Officers or Seamen, dying have Tickets made out of their Time of Service which are forthwith paid.

WHEN the whole Company of a Ship is removed they are paid their Wages to the Day they were removed, an Admiralty not a legislative Indulgence!

AND

AND for relieving them, from usurious Extortioners, and preventing them from having undue Advantages taken of their Necessities, Bargains, and Bills of Sale, for Pay due to any Seamen are *void*; nor is any Letter of Attorney good or valid for receiving such Wages or Pay, unless made *revocable*.

UPON these Laws is the present Marine System founded, the very Ordinances by which the whole is conducted, and whether in the executive Part there are any Acts of Cruelty or Oppression towards the Seamen, which may justify a Complaint of the slow and uncertain Payment of their Wages, I shall now proceed to consider; and recommend such Alterations as may appear reasonable and proper.

THE two principal Defects in the above recited Acts were as soon remedied as discovered; the One was in not authorizing the Payment of a Seaman's Wages who should by Accident be left Sick on Shore,

Men

B 2

after

after the Ship he belonged to should be sailed on a foreign Voyage; without leaving behind either Ticket or Books, in which Case the Invalid and Incurable must have returned home penniless or have starved when Discharged the Hospital. The other was the Manner, in which the Seamen serving in His Majesty's Ships in any Port of *Ireland* or abroad in foreign Parts were allowed to receive Two Months Pay at the End of every Six.

THE first Inconvenience was remedied by that necessary interposing Power, which the Lords of the Admiralty have usually exercised, over these useful People intrusted to their Care: They, no sooner saw the Defect, but their Humanity immediately pointed out the Remedy; and those Objects of Compassion who have lost their Health, or Limbs in the Service, are, in all Circumstances immediately paid the utmost Farthing of their Earnings.

THE Advantages, that were taken of the unthinking Seamen by artful designing Men,

Men, who purchased their Two Months Pay at a very considerable and extravagant Discount; rather encouraged their Extravagancies and their Vices, and baffled the good Intention of a speedy Payment. Upon these Complaints *that* Part of the Act was remitted, and tho' the Method in which it was directed to be done made it necessary to forbear the Execution of it any longer; yet the Intent was so laudable that it might have been revived, and executed in a Manner serviceable to the Seamen, their Wives, and their Families. It is an Object worthy of Attention! And I am sure those in whose department it lays, could find a clear, regular unembarrassed Manner of doing it, without heaping much more trouble on the Commanders, or calling the Aid of all the Officers of the Revenue to assist in the Execution of it. Those, who understand their Office know the Force of every Act which relates to it, and can best remove or guard against any Difficulties or Perplexities, that may attend the Execution of any new Business.

THUS

THUS I have considered the State and Practice of the Navy as it now stands, with regard to the Payment of Seamen's Wages and their Encouragements upon entering into the Service; I have pointed out the most material Defect which is still unremedied, and shall take upon me to consider, with the strictest Impartiality, the Ends and Purposes which are promised by this new Bill.

THE Distresses of the Seamen are laid before us in such pathetick Terms, that it cannot fail to move our Pity and Compassion; but let us consider, whilst we are applauding the Public Virtues of him who dare stand forth to release this harrassed set of Men, from the Oppressions and Hardships they are at this Time groaning under, that these Hardships these Oppressions must proceed from some Cause and have their different Sources; that they are not Natural, that they are not Constitutional Hardships, but must certainly arise from the
Negli-

Negligence of those, under whose Direction they are.

THE Body of Seamen by the existing Laws of this Country are not Slaves, it is then a natural Enquiry who has made them so?

THEY whose Province it is, they who have Power to relieve the Necessities and Wants of our Seamen by quick and certain Payment of their Wages, are certainly blameable for having thus long neglected them, even till their Cries and Oppressions have reached the very Guardians of the People, and the Legislative Power is compelled to Adopt their Cause: They could have no Redress from their own immediate Lords and Governors. Those who have the sole dispensing Power of slow or quick Payments and of every other Encouragement of Right belonging to the Seamen, to withhold from them their legal and just Due, their dear got Earnings, to be tardy in the Distribution of Justice and
deaf

deaf to the Entreaties of a faithful set of Men, discover sure the want of Humanity in their Breasts who now preside over our Marine Affairs.

THESE are either undeniable Truths; or the Author of the Pamphlet who occasions these Remarks, does amuse us with the misrepresentation, of the distresses Seamen are supposed to Labour under.

THE noble Lords and Gentlemen intrusted to Execute the Lord High Admirals Commission having, as it has been indisputably shewn, the Power and Management of the Naval Seamen, they cannot from oppressive Principles, they cannot from a natural Cruelty, withhold the Pay from them. They are of Characters too well established to suffer by that Authors insinuation, I shall therefore suppose it was necessary to shew, in Order to aggrandize the promoter of that Bill, that his Public Virtue dared to rescue the injured Seamen out of the Hands of Oppression and that
Public

Public Rewards should follow such an Attempt.

THAT the Seamen in His Majesty's Navy are well cloathed, well fed, and well paid are Truths not to be controverted; the Contractors of the Victualling must know that the best Prices are given for their Provision; their Slops are bought at the best Hand which are retailed to them at very near the same Rate, and that they are well paid, of which there are such recent Instances in the Ships now gone abroad, that one has not three Weeks Pay due and others scarce six Months, that I need not descend to further Particulars; nor can Instances be ever found, but in Cases of the greatest Emergency, where a Squadron or Ships has been going abroad without clearing the greatest Part of the Wages due: The Attention of the Admiralty on such Occasions has been great; they have not wanted a Spur to their Duty, nor a tender Com-

*The Royal
George's Men
paid to 30th of
January 1758.*

C

pas-

Compassionate Regard for the gallant Seamen.

I HAVE been led from my Purpose of considering the Views of the Bill depending by too much Attention, to the Prefatory Introduction of the Abstract; for indeed on that, more than on the Arguments made use of, depends its Success: His Representation of the Sufferings of the British Seamen you are first to believe, thro' their Side, he is to wound those Honorable Personages whose daily Study is to encourage and protect them. You are then to be convinced that the Source of this Distress to our Seamen hath been the slow and uncertain Payment of their Wages, that upon their return home from foreign Voyages there is no fixed Time for their Payment.

THIS you are to believe and in this Manner to be prepared, to receive a Bill calculated to redress these Grievances.

TRULY

TRULY lamentable would the Case of our brave Seamen be, if this was true! Great and glorious his Memory who should attempt, and succeed in that Attempt, to relieve them! But as I have clearly shewed before, the salutary Laws in being, have been constantly, regularly, and punctually put in Execution, as far as the Service would permit, for paying the Seamen from Time to Time, a Part of their growing Wages; and as often as the Ship they have served in is laid up the *whole* has been cleared.—Facts are stubborn Truths, and will prevail!

I WILL not tire the Reader with Remarks upon Remarks, or a Repetition of the several Clauses contained in the Bill, because most of them are already practised by the Constitution of the Navy and others directed in former Acts of Parliament but point out the great Objects which are intended by this Bill, and proceed to consider them.

First,

First, THE Appropriation of all the Money granted for Naval Services towards the Discharge of Seamen's Wages.

Secondly, THE constant Payment of such Wages by paying six Months in every twelve, to all His Majesty's Ships in any Port in Great-Britain.

Thirdly, THE enabling Seamen who are serving in Ships abroad, to empower their Wives and Families to receive Part of their Wages in their Absence.

Fourthly, To give the Seamen at home an Opportunity at the Pay of their Ship to remit, a Part thereof to their Wives and Families.

THESE I apprehend are the great points in View, the very Basis of the Bill, and which, without any Disguise, might have been fairly stated and argued before you.

THE

THE Inconvenience and Prejudice to the Government, by subjecting the Naval Grants, in the first Place, to Seamen's Wages, would immediately appear by a great discount upon Bills made out for Stores and Provisions for the Use of the Navy.

THE Debt of the Navy would not only be encreased by Interest due on Bills, but the Price on all Kinds of Stores would be enhanced as in former Wars, in Proportion to the Discount on such Bills. By the regular Discharge of Navy Bills in Course of Payment the Discount has been kept low, scarce at common Interest, the Price of Stores has been proportionable and free from additional Discounts of five or six *per Cent.* which the Non-payment of Bills, in due Time, would naturally create.

Four Pounds *per* Month for every Seamen employed in His Majesty's Service does not defray the Expence of Wear and
Tear

Tear, Provisions, Ordinance, Wages, and other unavoidable Naval Expences; the Deficiencies every Year prove this and a Debt is consequently incurred; even tho' some Part or Proportion of the Money allotted out of the Grants, for Wages, is employed towards reducing that Part of it, which carries an Interest, and without which the Credit of the Navy would be still worse affected, the Contract Prices on all Stores considerably encreased, and an Interest created, which has and may be, upon the present Method of Payments kept under,

SHOULD this new appropriating Scheme take Place, a considerable Part of the Money allotted to the Head of Wages must be unemployed, whilst our Fleets remain in foreign Parts, and whilst the Course of the Navy would be running on at an Interest and at a considerable Discount.

IF we are to disregard Expence, to use no Parsimony in our Naval Conduct, but
sacri-

sacrifice all to one favourite, adopted Child ?
Then let the Supplies granted by Parliament be appropriated issued and applied to the Discharge of Seamen's Wages.

I SHALL next consider the Benefits proposed to the Seamen by frequent Payments and of the fatal Consequences of it to our Sea Service.

THE fifth Clause in the Bill directs, the Captains of His Majesty's Ships, whether at home or in any Part of His Majesty's Dominions, to make out five compleat pay Books for every six Months, the Ship shall have been in Pay, except the last six Months, and to transmit the same to the Commissioners of the Navy.

By which it is intended, that the Wages due upon such Books shall be cleared, as fast as the Service will permit such Ships to come into Port.

WHEN

WHEN the Necessity of altering the present Method of Payments shall appear? When the Nature and Constitution of our British Seamen shall be changed, and contrary to all Experience be better and happier with Money in their Pockets?

THEN the Sea Officers will alter their Opinions, and regardless of the infinite Trouble, of making such frequent sets of Pay-Books, chearfully submit to any Thing for the Benefit of their Men?

THEY are already loaded with a Multitude of Accounts, perplexing and harassing to them, yet they are forced to submit but cannot do it under this new load.

A KNOWLEDGE of our Maritime People, their thoughtless, heedless Conduct in every Step in Life, thoroughly considered; the Absurdity of too frequent Payments would be too glaring to contend for.

LET

LET our Sea Officers speak? Let them declare how ridiculously and foolishly the Seamen squander away their Money, how uncontrollable at such a Crisis? Then it will appear how dangerous such a Practice would be? I would be far from aggravating the foibles and Misconduct of this useful Set of Men; I would on the contrary plead their Cause and for them say; that too frequent Payments would be productive of Mutiny, Disorder and Licentiousness, the natural concomitant of Money in a Seaman's Pocket. No! Let them rather save a little together, as a Kind of Nest Egg, the favourite of all thrifty Servants, that after their Toils and Labours are over, they may have something to live awhile with their Families, in Peace and Content, and not be obliged immediately to return to their watery Element to Fatigue and Hardships.

I HAVE thus considered the Consequences of these Payments to the Seamen

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and

and shall next consider the good or ill Tendency they may be to His Majesty's Service.

IT is a Fact universally established that no Seaman can work with Money in his Pocket, it is therefore that the Payments of all Kinds to the Seamen are postponed till a Ship, upon her Arrival in Port to be cleaned, is cleared of her Stores, docked and again refitted. This universal Practice, has never been varied in any Instance; the Attempt would be fruitless and endanger the unmanning of a well disciplin'd Ship. There is no Reason can curb a Seamen flushed with Money, his Intemperance is predominant, and he will risque all, even his Life, to indulge his Passions. In this Condition must our Navy be! Undisciplined and unmanned; for no Calculations can be fair that will not admit of twenty Deserters that have under a Years Pay due, to one that has above a Year. Their growing Wages is a Stake that holds them
it

it is a Bank they don't forget, which keeps them chearfully together, and makes their toilsome Life pass away in Comfort. There are numberless Instances of Seamen bound upon a foreign Voyage having been just paid, and finding no Opportunity at Sea to squander away their dear earned Wages, have, regardless of their Loss, play'd away their Gold, as Trash useless and unprofitable. If these are, their Ideas of the Use of Money, why endanger they unmanning of the Fleet? Why Indulge the Vices and Extravagances of the Seamen and destroy their Healths and Constitutions? Why put the Government to an extraordinary Expence for extraordinary Payments to those; whose Bellies are so well filled whose Backs are so comfortably cloathed.

I HAVE admitted that the Method prescribed in the Act of the 1st *George* 2d of paying two Months Pay in six was defective, and being found so, was discontinued.

I AM far from thinking that an Expedient of supplying the Wife of any Seamen nay the Father, Mother or Child, with Part of his Wages during his Absence on a long Voyage, is improper or impracticable. It is an Encouragement Seamen deserve, it is doing a real Good ; but the Method should be thoroughly considered ; for Embarrassments will follow indigested Plans.

THAT this has been considered, that a well digested Plan for this good Work has been reported to the proper Officers, is true and publicly known, tho' it does not Appear in the Bill under Consideration.

THE fourth and last Object of this Bill is to enable the Seaman at the Time of receiving his Wages at home to remit such Part thereof as he shall think proper for his Wife and Family.

AN

AN intelligent Man, conversant in Business, can't be long in finding out a Method for doing this with equal Ease and Safety; without retarding the Payment of the Ship, that may be unmooring for the Sea at the Time of the Payment, without interfering with any public Offices, or even Officers of the Revenue in distant Countries. Let such Part of his Wages as he shall chuse, be paid in a promissory Note signed by the Treasurer of the Navy or his Deputy, for any small Sums from one to five Pounds, and these made payable to Order; the Seamen can direct the Name to be inserted for whom he intends the Note; and being remitted agreeable to his Order, the Wife, the Relation or the Friend will find a ready Acceptance of that Bill, by any of the trading People or others, who want Remittances to *London*; there will then be no official Embarrassments, the Treasurer of the Navy's Office in *London* will receive and pay it with

with the same Ease, the Bank or Bankers would do their Notes.

HAVING thus maturely weighed and considered all the Advantages and Disadvantages which will accrue to the Service by passing this Bill into a Law and given the Author all the Merit he deserves, for altering a good old House, with good Rooms in it at a great Expence, to a modern shewy one, without a conveniency in it, I shall beg leave to sift into his Motives for doing this.

I WILL venture to say there is no new Thing proposed by the Act which the Admiralty had not Power to direct to be done; that most of the practicable Clauses, are already in Use and that the penal ones, respecting the Captains of the Men of War, are Embarrassments of which they will have the greatest Reason to complain.

THE

THE Promoter of an Act, for the Encouragement of Seamen and for the more certain Payment of their Wages, has an undoubted Right to the Acknowledgements of that Body of People and of the Seaport trading Towns. It is a popular Subject, Popularity will follow, it is all that's desired or can be meant by this Bill.

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The Promoter of an Act, for the Dis-
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